

## Pieces of Eight

Being the Authentic Narrative of a Treasure Discovered in the Bahama Islands in the Year 1903—Now First Given to the Public.

BY RICHARD LEGALLIENNE

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### SYNOPSIS.

#### BOOK I.

**CHAPTER I.**—The author, who tells the story, is on a visit to his friend, John Saunders, British official in the town of Nassau, Bahama Islands. Conversation turns on buried treasure.

**CHAPTER II.**—Saunders produces a document supposedly written by Henry P. Tobias, once a pirate, telling of two places where gold has been secreted in the islands. Tobias' conversation apparently is overheard, and the document disappears.

**CHAPTER III.**—The writer charts a schooner, the *Maggie Darling*, and sets out on a search for the treasure. As they sail they take aboard a passenger, whom the author instinctively distrusts.

**CHAPTER IV.**—The hero strikes up a particular friendship with "Old Tom," a negro member of the crew. The boat is passed by the *Susan B.*, a faster sailer, also from Nassau.

**CHAPTER V.**—On the second morning they find that the supply of gasoline has been allowed to run out. Our writer blames the engineer and in a fit of temper knocks him down. The passenger, calling himself Henry P. Tobias, Jr., protests, and it comes out that he is active in a conspiracy to have the blacks rise against the British government in the Bahamas. He attempts the life of the hero and with two others is put ashore.

**CHAPTER VI.**—The *Maggie Darling* arrives at her destination and the party lands. The *Susan B.* has reached there and landed men. A fight ensues and the captain of the *Maggie Darling* is killed, but his gang is driven off, several being left behind dead.

**CHAPTER VII.**—The author and "Old Tom" start a search for the treasure.

**CHAPTER VIII.**—In a cave they find two skeletons, evidently of pirates, and an empty chest. They give up the quest and sail back to Nassau.

#### BOOK II.

**CHAPTER I.**—At Nassau Charlie Webster, a friend of both Saunders and the writer, joins the party and they arrange an expedition to "Dead Men's Shoes." Webster's object is solely the capture of Tobias, whom he is hunting down as a traitor.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

**An Unfinished Game of Cards.**  
One evening as I returned to the ship unusually worn out and disheartened I asked Tom how the stores were holding out. He answered cheerfully that they would last another week and leave us enough to get home.

"Well, shall we stick out the other week or not, Tom? I don't want to kill you, and I confess I'm nearly all in myself."

"May as well stick it out, sar, now we've gone so far. Then we'll have done all we can, and there's a certain satisfaction in doing that, sar."

So next morning we went at it again, and the next, and the next again, and then on the fourth day, when our week was drawing to its close, something at last happened to change the grim monotony of our days.

It was shortly after the lunch hour. Tom and I, who were now working too far apart to hear each other's halloos, had fired our revolvers once or twice to show that all was right with us. But, for no reason I can give, I suddenly got a feeling that all was not right with the old man, so I fired my revolver and gave him time for a reply. But there was no answer. Again I fired. Still no answer. I was on the point of firing again when I heard something coming through the brush behind me. It was Sailor racing toward me over the jagged rocks. Evidently there was something wrong.

"Something wrong with old Tom, Sailor?" I asked, as though he could answer me. And indeed he did answer as plainly as dog could, wagging his tail and whining and turning to go back with me in the direction whence he had come.

"Off we go, then, old chap," and as he ran ahead, I followed him as fast as I could.

It took me the best part of an hour to get to where Tom had been working. Sailor brushed his way ahead, pushing through the scrub with canine importance. Presently, at the top of a slight elevation, I came among the bushes to a softer spot where the soil had given way, and saw that it was the mouth of a shaft like a wide chimney flue, the earth of which had evidently fallen in. Here Sailor stopped and whined, pawing the earth, and at the same time I heard a moaning underneath.

"Is that you, Tom?" I called. Thank God, the old chap was not dead at all events.

"Thank the Lord, it's you, sar," he cried. "I'm all right, but I've had a bad fall—and I can't seem able to move."

"Hold on and keep up your heart—I'll be with you in a minute," I called down to him.

"Mind yourself, sar," he called cheerily, and indeed it was a problem to get down to him without precipitating the loose earth and rocks that were ready to make a landslide down the hole, and perhaps bury him forever.

But, looking about, I found another natural tunnel in the side of the hill. Into this I was able to worm myself, and in the dim light found the old man and put my flask to his lips.

"Anything broken, do you think?" Tom didn't think so. He had evidently been stunned by his fall, and another pull at my flask set him on his feet. But as I helped him up, and, striking a light, we began to look around the hole he had tumbled into, he gave a piercing shriek and fell on his knees, jabbering with fear.

"The ghosts! the ghosts!" he screamed.

And the sight that met our eyes was certainly one to try the nerves. Two

figures sat at a table—one with his hat tilted slightly and one leaning sideways in his chair in a careless sort of attitude. They seemed to be playing cards, and they were strangely white for they were skeletons.

I stood hushed, while Tom's teeth rattled at my side. The fantastic awe of the thing was beyond telling. And then, not without a qualm or two, which I would be a liar to deny, I went and stood nearer to them. Nearly all their clothes had fallen away, hanging but in shreds here and there. That the hat had so jauntily kept its place was one of those grim touches Death, that terrible humorist, loves to add to his jests.

The cards which had apparently just been dealt, had suffered severely from decay—only a little dirt had sifted down upon them, as it had into the rum glasses that stood, too, at each man's side. And as I looked at the skeleton jauntily facing me, I noticed that a bullet hole had been made as clean as if by a drill in his forehead of bone—while, turning to examine more closely his silent partner, I noticed a rusty sailor's knife hanging from the ribs where the lungs had been. Then I looked on the floor and found the key to the whole story. For there, within a few yards, stood a heavy sailor's chest, strongly bound around with iron. Its lid was thrown back and a few coins lay scattered at the bottom, while a few lay about on the floor. I picked them up.

They were pieces of eight! Meanwhile Tom had stopped jabbering and had come nearer, looking on in awed silence. I showed him the pieces of eight.

"I guess these are all we'll see of one John P. Tobias' treasure, Tom," I said. And it looks as if these poor fellows saw as little of it as ourselves. Can't you imagine them with it there at their feet—perhaps playing to divide it on a gamble, and meanwhile the other fellows stealing in through some of these rabbit runs—one with a knife, the other with a gun—and then off with the loot and up with the sails. Poor devils! It strikes me as a very pretty tragedy—doesn't it you?"

Suddenly—perhaps with the vibration of our voices—the hat toppled off the head of the fellow facing us in the most weird and comical fashion—and that was too much for Tom, and he screamed and made for the exit hole.



I Waited a Minute to Replace the Hat on the Rakish One's Head.

But I waited a minute to replace the hat on the rakish one's head. As I was likely often to think of him in the future I preferred to remember him at the moment of our first strange acquaintance.

### Book II.

#### CHAPTER I.

Once More in John Saunders' Snuggery.

Need I say that it was a great occasion when I was once more back safe in John Saunders' snuggery, telling my story to my two friends, John and Charlie Webster, all just as if I had never stirred from my easy chair, instead of having spent an exciting month or so among sharks, dead men, blood-lapping ghosts, card-playing skeletons and such like?

My friends listened to my yarn in characteristic fashion, John Saunders' eyes like mice peeping out of a cupboard, and Charlie Webster's huge bulk poised almost threatening, as it were, with the keenness of his attention. His deep-set kind brown eyes glowed like a boy's as I went on, but

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by their dangerous kindling at certain points of the story, those dealing with our pockmarked friend, Henry P. Tobias, Jr., I soon realized where, for him, the chief interest of the story lay.

"The — rebel!" he roared out once or twice, using an adjective peculiarly English. For him my story had but one moral—the treason of Henry P. Tobias, Jr. The treasure might as well have had no existence, so far as he was concerned, and the grim climax in the cave drew nothing from him but a pre-occupied nod. And John Saunders was little more satisfactory. Both of them allowed me to end in silence. They both seemed to be thinking deeply.

"I must say you two are a great audience," I said presently, perhaps rather childishly nettled.

"It's a very serious matter," said John Saunders, and I realized that it was not my crony but the secretary to the treasury of his Britannic majesty's government at Nassau that was talking. As he spoke he looked across at Charlie Webster, almost as if forgetting me. "Something should be done about it, eh, Charlie?" he continued.

"— traitor!" roared Charlie, once more employing that British adjective. And then he turned to me:

"Look here, old pal, I'll make a bargain with you, if you like. I suppose you're keen for that other treasure now, eh?"

"I am," said I, rather stiffly.

"Well, then, I'll go after it with you—on one condition. You can keep the treasure, if you'll give me Tobias. It would do my heart good to get him, as you had the chance of doing that afternoon. Whatever were you doing to miss him?"

"I proposed to myself the satisfaction of making good that mistake," I said, "on our next meeting. I feel I owe it to the poor old captain."

"Never mind; hand the captain's rights over to me—and I'll help you all I know with your treasure. Besides, Tobias is a job for an Englishman—eh, John? It's a matter of 'king and country' with me. With you it would be mere private vengeance. With me it will be an execution; with you it would be a murder. Isn't that so, John?"

"Exactly," John nodded. "Since you were away," Charlie began again, "I've bought the prettiest yawl you ever set eyes on—the *Flamingo*—forty-five over all, and this time the very fastest boat in the harbor. Yes! she's faster even than the *Susan B.* Now I've a holiday due me in about a fortnight. Say the word, and the *Flamingo's* yours for a couple of months, and her captain too. I make only that one condition."

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK)

### Wanted His Privilege.

Robert did not want to have his bobbed hair cut off. He made a great fuss. He consented after his mother told him that with short hair he would look like a big boy. At the usual bedtime his mother told him to go to bed, and he sadly said: "I wish I didn't have my hair cut. What is the use of looking like a big boy if I have to go to bed the same time as the baby boys?"



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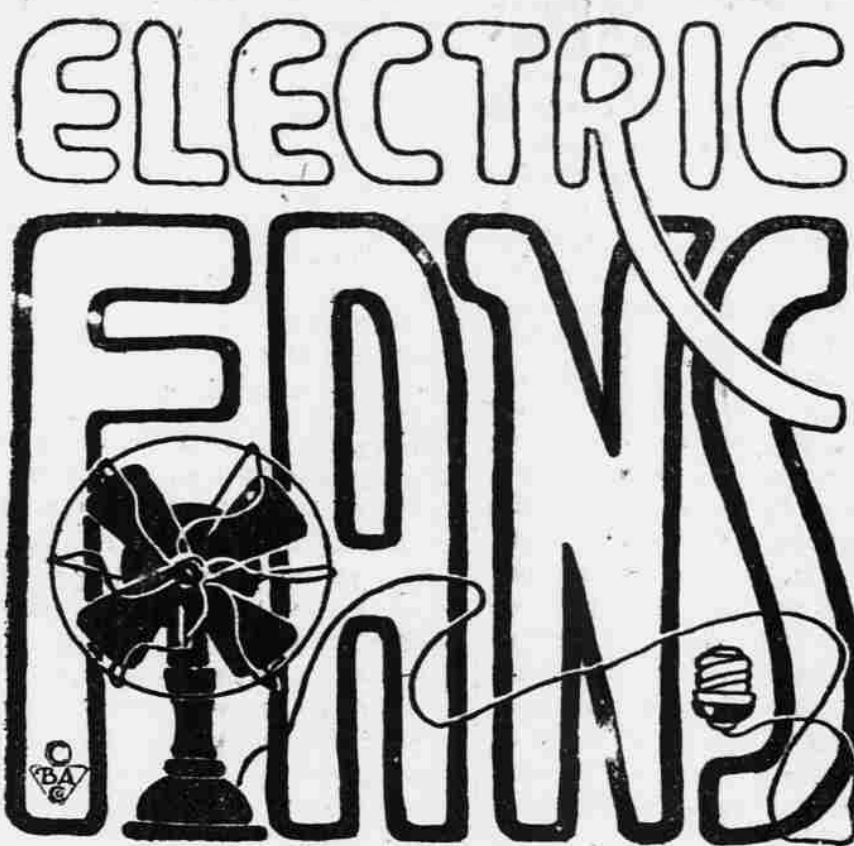
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That was nice. No, it wasn't. When I checked up I found that I was still \$48 short of having enough to buy all that you wanted.



### THE LAST WORD.

Old Mrs. Gay lost part of her camouflaged while dancing last eve. Lost what? Her wig! Her wig! of course.

### FASHION'S SNARES.

Why does Dauber draw so much from the nude?

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### CONSISTENT.

"He's consistent at least. In what way? He not only won't spend any money himself, but he also hates to see other people spending it."

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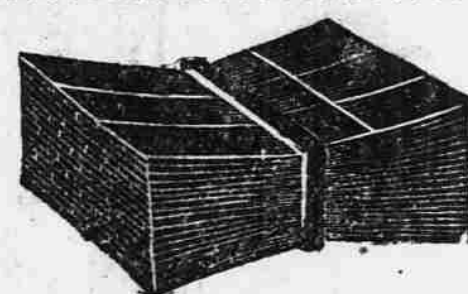
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